Press release | 17.06.2010

Protecting Human Rights Defenders

European Parliament wants to give better protection to Human Rights Defenders

The European Parliament adopted today the report of Green MEP **Heidi Hautala**, Chair of the Subcommittee on Human rights, on Human Rights Defenders with near unanimity. High Representative, Ms Catherine Ashton, who took part in the hearing, welcomed the recommendations of the report. She underlined its importance in developing the new EU human rights policy on the grounds of the newly adopted Lisbon Treaty. Commenting on the result of the vote Ms Hautala said:

"Human Rights defenders are in need of our support all around the world. These are courageous people who often put themselves in great danger to defend the rights of others. They deserve our support now. The report is only the beginning of the hard work. Policies must be developed, activities must be monitored and results analyzed to deliver on our promise"

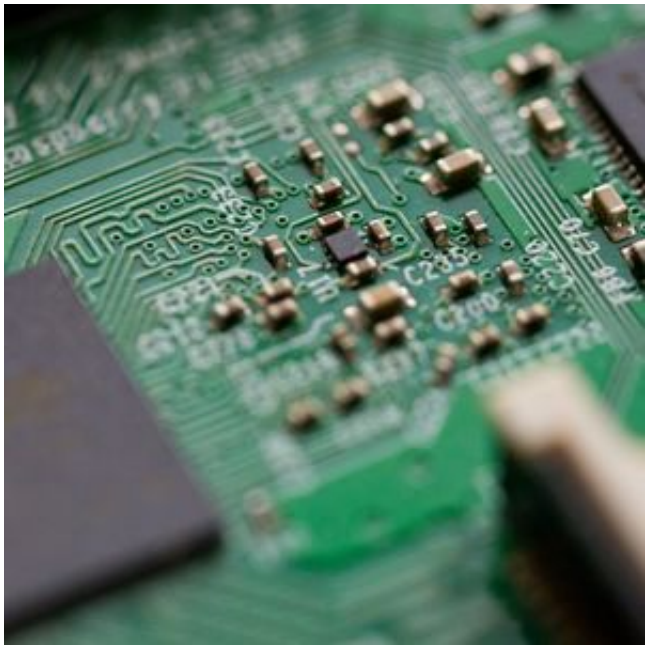
The European Parliament recommends support for the creation of shelter cities, and wants Member States to grant emergency visas more swiftly to human rights defenders.

"I am very pleased to see that the Parliament has now sent a strong signal to the High Representative and all Commissioners working in the field of external relations, telling them to systematically meet with human rights defenders when they officially travel to third countries. We also stress the responsibilities of EU delegations abroad to support them", Heidi Hautala said.

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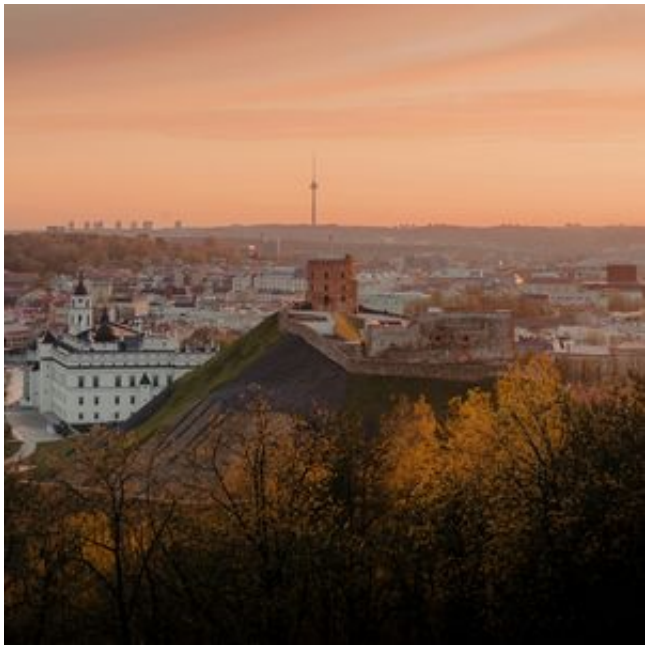
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Heidi Hautala

EP Vice-President, Member

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